

## Chapter 6

# When the Good in Therapy Does Not Last

*Most people go to therapy because something hurts them. In essence, they go to feel better. For many though, these improvements all but disappear within months of therapy ending. Why is this? Is therapy temporary by design? Is it that we backslide this badly; out of sight, out of mind? Or is there something more to why this happens? Something we could be doing differently? In this chapter of Plain Talk about Talk Therapy, we're going to explore why some therapy does not last. We're also going to contrast this with therapy of the more permanent variety. Do you know what makes them different? Let's find out.*

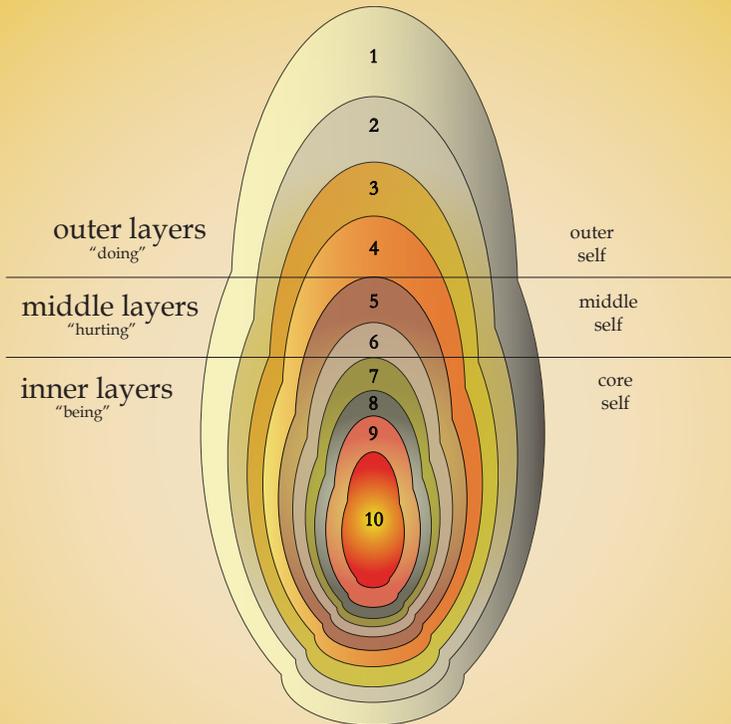
### The Ten Nested Layers of Personality

Have you ever seen a Russian Nesting Doll? A Ukrainian Matryoshka? If you have, then you have witnessed one of the best hold-in-your-hand analogies for how personality is organized. A developmental fractal with ten nested layers. To be honest, the ten doll matryoshka sets can be hard to come by. I waited many months for mine as it is a one of a kind hand painted in Russia.

Why go to all this trouble to get a nested set of ten matryoshka dolls? Mainly because once you get to physically examine a ten doll set, you begin to see how perfectly it portrays the structure of human personality. Ten little versions of

## Personality as the Ten Russian Nesting Dolls (according to Emergence Personality Theory)

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### The Ten Layers Listed

- 1 - personal non existence
- 2 - punishing question, excuses, and explanations for not punishing
- 3 - time limited punishments
- 4 - eternal punishments
  - 5 - symptoms
  - 6 - blocks
  - 7 - pure needs
  - 8 - disconnections
  - 9 - connections to persons
  - 10- connections to the "all"

the same individual. Each one hiding a more personal version of itself. At least until you reach the center doll. The doll which hides nothing inside.

This then is what I've drawn in this week's diagram, two representations of this ten doll matryoshka set. On the left you'll see a cross section of the ten doll set still together, and on the right the ten dolls are all opened and apart.

The main thing to notice here is how these dolls are nested. One inside another. All the way from doll number one on the outside to doll number ten at the center. Our personalities function very similarly to this in that the parts of ourselves contained in our Outer Layers are what is furthest from our true selves. Here we feel closed and guarded, and there is much of ourselves we hold back. Our Inner Layers then are those which contain what is closest to our hearts. And to our truth. Here we feel personally open and hide almost nothing.

Know my point for showing you this ten doll nesting fractal is not to teach it all to you here. Rather, I simply want to use it to introduce you to a couple of things about personality. One, how our wounds divide us into two kinds of people, an outer self, and an inner self. And two, how after we heal a wound, who we are on the outside matches who we are on the inside. We literally become the same person inside and out. At least in the life area wherein we just healed a wound.

How exactly does this fractal represent the way our personalities divide? To see, we'll first need to talk about the doll at which this division occurs. Doll number 6. We'll also need to talk about what happens within this doll and why it divides us into two people. Something I call, "blocks."

What are *blocks*? *Blocks* are like holes in your ability to picture life events. Places where your visual memories jump and skip. Here, parts of your memories have literally been blocked from your conscious self, the essence of which is that we can no longer picture something.

What does it feel like to have one of these blocks? Many times, it feels almost inconsequential, such as when we cannot bring to mind some particular object; the big black dog that used to live next door or the china your mother used to put out when company came.

At other times, blocks can feel a lot more serious, such as when whole categories of life events become inaccessible. Things your mind knows happened but that you just cannot picture such as childhood birthday parties or being weighed in elementary school.

Worse yet are the kind of blocks which impair your ability to relate to others such as being unable to picture your father's eyes when he glared at you at the dinner table. Or what your mother's open mouth looked like as she yelled at the dog. What kinds of problems would these things cause? In the first case, you might overreact to any man who glared at you. In the second case, you might get

set off so badly by seeing your wife's mouth yelling at the kids that you might forget that in these moments, she needs your help.

In a way then, blocks are like psychological movies of our life events wherein some of the frames have been damaged. However, the thing to realize here is that "blocks" are not merely things or scenes we cannot *remember*. They are parts of our lives we can no longer visually access. People and events which have become unavailable to our conscious mind. Things and scenes we can no longer *picture* even when asked to make them up.

Why make such a big deal out of these missing frames of life? Mainly because they are the entire cause and source of our being unable to be ourselves. Thus, rather than being mere inconveniences or ordinary memory lapses, whenever we experience one of these blocks, the person we are on the outside does not match the person we are on the inside. Moreover, this holds true even for the most wise and spiritual of people. We simply cannot make up for what is missing.

How does not being ourselves feel in real life? To get an idea, try to imagine the following. Try to imagine that you have been asked by your coworkers to go to a local restaurant to pick up lunch for them. Now imagine that rather than giving you a list, they've asked you to decide what to get for them. Something you think they would all like.

Okay. Being asked to do this for others can feel a bit unnerving at times. However, in this case, imagine that you've done this before. Many, many times. Add to this that they've always loved what you've chosen. Complimented you even for how well you've done. The thing is, on this day, for some strange reason, the waiter asks you what you'd like to order without first having handed you a menu. Strange. Then, when you do ask him for a menu, the one he hands you has black paint spilled all over it. Rendering much of which is written on this menu unreadable.

Not so nice, eh? Now comes the part, though, that will give you a good idea of what it is like to have blocks. I'd like you to picture trying to order lunch off this menu. How do you think it would feel? More important, I want you to remember that what you are ordering is for other people as well?

Of course, if it was me, I'd probably request another menu. Wouldn't you. But say the waiter then told you this was the only menu he had. What would you do then?

In all likelihood, you'd do your best to piece together some kind of choices. Probably by combining the little you could read on the menu with what you could remember having ordered in the past. The thing is, this *do the best you can with what you can see* scenario is very much like what we do when we relive a psychological injury. The difference being of course is that instead of an unread-

able menu with black paint spilled on it, in the case of psychological injuries, our minds become unreadable. Why? Because witnessing some startling life event has programmed us to go blank in this and any similar scenes.

Here then are the parts of ourselves contained in Layer Six; *The Layer of Blocks*. Layer 6 literally holds all the experiences wherein we suffer visual blanknesses and skips and sputters. All of which impair our ability to see parts of our inner self. Which then results in our having to bluff our way through many personally meaningful choices.

In other words, whenever we have a block and are faced with making a personally meaningful choice, we base this choice more on past experiences and logic than on what we'd really base these choices on, given we could see inside ourselves. This then results in that our outer *doing* and our inner *being* do not match. Moreover this happens even in cases wherein we intuit that what we are about to do is wrong. Why? Because without a clear picture of who we are inside, we simply choose from what we can see.

Now consider how therapies normally address these blocked visual abilities. How? They don't.

Thus, despite the fact that most good talk therapies talk about getting our outsides to match our insides, at best, all they do is make these same kinds of educated guesses. Again based on what they can see. Or else they avoid the problem entirely by telling you they have no right to tell you what to do.

The thing is, not knowing this is no one's fault. You see, prior to Emergence Personality Theory, no one has described injury as other than some variation of the two things we can see; *symptoms* and *painful events*. And yes, it is good to get rid of symptoms like depression and rage. And it is good to make sense of painful events like having been molested or having been in a car accident. Unfortunately while symptoms and painful events do have much to do with why we behave badly at times, they are both more like the stale bread on a salmonella laden egg salad sandwich. Not the worst part and certainly not the deadly part.

Now let's look at why. First, we'll need to see what *symptoms* and *painful events* have in common. Second, I'll need to show you how they are both caused by blocks.

What do *symptoms* and *painful events* have in common? Basically, just one thing. They are both the thing we can see about our injuries. What is still visible within our wounded psyches. What we can still picture in our minds.

Now contrast this with blocks, which are the parts of our injuries we cannot see. The parts which have become invisible within our wounded psyches. The parts of our *symptoms* and *painful events* we can no longer picture.

How then do these visual blank spots cause our *symptoms* and *painful events*? Simple. The blocks in Layer 6 block our needs in Layer 7. Which then

cause symptoms to appear in Layer 5. And painful events to occur in Layers 4 through 1.

Now take a moment to let all this sink in. This in fact is one of the most important ideas I could ever teach you. How these visual blocks cause our *symptoms* and *painful events*. And how Layer 6 divides us into two different people, an outer self and an inner self.

To see this, let's start by looking at Layer 7. Layer 7 is where we store all of our personal *needs*. Our most basic desires. Our core ways of experiencing life. And normally, if we were able to see these needs, we would simply address them. We are, in fact, born programmed to behave this way. Which after all is why the first thing we do as humans is to cry. We cry as our way of announcing to the world we have unmet needs.

The thing is, if we become unable to see these *needs*, then we cannot even cry about them let alone address them. And when a need goes unaddressed for a long, long time, *symptoms* appear.

Then, if these symptoms last for a long, long time, we get desperate and do desperate things. Like screaming at our children when they're just being children. Or marrying someone we know we do not love. Which then results in that we experience painful events. Things like having our children say they do not trust us when we tell them to come to us if they need to talk. Or ignoring the emptiness in a marriage until one day, we wake up divorced and devastated and wondering how it all happened.

What I'm saying is, when a *block* in Layer 6 blocks our ability to see a *need*, we have no way to know this need exists. We simply cannot see into our inner selves to see it. At some point then, even though we can't see this need, we'll know it is there, simply because we'll see the signs. Things like that we'll feel depressed and tired or lost and alone or unmotivated and unloved or filled with rage.

These kinds of visible signs are literally *the symptoms of blocked needs*. Or to state this idea in Emergence Personality Theory terms, blocked needs cause symptoms.

Finally, when these symptoms persist for long enough, they provoke us into doing compensatory behaviors. Ways of behaving in which we do our best to order off the menu of life without first addressing the fact that someone or something has spilled black paint all over it.

Not the best way to make meaningful life choices. Or any life choices, for that matter.

## Talk Therapy and the Outer Layers

Now let's explore what is contained in the five Layers which lie outside of Layer 6. Layers 5 - 1. What parts of our personalities are contained within these

five Layers? Let's begin with the Layer just outside of Layer 6. Layer 5.

As we just mentioned a moment ago, in Layer 5, *The Layer of Symptoms*, we find all of the visible evidence for that we have blocked needs. Anything from the heaviness of anxiety and lost hope to the distress of failed marriages and physical ailments.

In Layer 4 then, *The Layer of Eternal Punishments*, we feel powerful urges to punish someone for our having these symptoms. Either ourselves or someone else. Either way though, some one is going to pay. Talk radio blamers and flaming TV preachers focus on this part of our nature. And fire up in us these Layer 4 urges to end this suffering once and for all, by punishing someone to death.

In Layer 3, *The Layer of Time Limited Punishments*, we also find our urges to punish people. However, these urges are merely to make people suffer a bit. Only until they admit how badly they treated us. And perhaps, beg us for mercy. Thus, in Layer 3, we find things like our urges to put people in jail rather than putting them to death. As well as urges to not speak to your spouse for a week rather than divorcing her.

Then we have Layer 2. A complex Layer to be sure. What is in Layer 2?

In Layer 2, *The Layer of Punishing Questions, Explanations, and Excuses for Not Punishing Someone*, we have all the ways in which we humans behave like talking heads. Things like logically explaining why it is we treat each other so badly. Which in a way, makes those uncivilized acts appear civilized. At least to other talking heads.

This is why I sometimes call what we do in Layer 2, *civilized blame*. In other words, in Layer 2, we make up civil explanations and logical excuses for things like the way we kill each other in wars and annihilate whole animal species. As well as why we are justified in ignoring the needs of a whole group of people, like middle class white men whom we are currently taught have no needs.

In addition to all this lovely stuff, Layer 2 also contains all of our "if I were king for a day" kinds of barfings. Things that we believe we know how to fix. Including what we think is wrong with our friends, children, relatives and co workers. As well as the reasons and evidence we are certain we are right.

Complicated? Yes it is. However, what can help you here is to know we can break all this stuff down into only four categories. The four main ways we civilize our punishing actions.

What are the four categories? Philosophy. Psychology. Politics. And religion. These are the four, big Layer 2 categories.

Now think about what I've just said. Layer 2 contains what? *Punishing Questions, Explanations, and Excuses for Not Punishing Someone*. Which means what? That these four things are the four basic ways in which we try to make ourselves feel better when bad stuff happens.

No coincidence then that most of what we do in talk therapy relies on what is contained in the big four. Why? *Because these four Layer 2 categories are the four main ways we make ourselves feel better. Including what makes us feel better in most therapy.*

How exactly does doing this stuff make us feel better? It's simple really. Everything we talk about in these four categories applies to human beings in general. Huge seas of heads. And whenever we become just another head in a sea of heads, we depersonalize ourselves. Along with our suffering. How? By becoming just another number on the statistician's charts.

This is why I sometimes call [1] philosophy, [2] psychology, [3] politics, and [4] religion; the four anesthetics. They are the four main ways in which we distance ourselves from the pain of living. Including the pain which results from us having blocks.

The question then becomes, so do we gain anything positive from practicing these four Layer 2 endeavors? Absolutely. For one thing, we diffuse our urges to punish people. How? Again, by distancing ourselves from our pain. This is why I call much of what happens in talk therapy, doing *damage control*. Why *damage control*? Because these logical explanations and reified excuses actually do help us lash out less. At least temporarily. We also get to feel hope for awhile. Why? Because by thinking we understand our pain, we feel confident we can avoid it in the future.

Please know I am not being sarcastic here. I sincerely am not. Nor am I, in any way, saying these four things have no value. Indeed, I myself love philosophy and believe it and the other three Layer 2 big four hold great value. And great beauty. The thing is, while they may hold great value and beauty, unfortunately they also move us further away where the real trouble lies. In Layer 6. And while at times we all need to soothe our troubled minds, each time we do, we lose much of what motivates us to face our deeper, more personal problems.

So do any talk therapies do more than damage control? Yes. Some do. We'll talk more about this in a moment. For now though, we have one more Layer to look at, in our journey through what lies outside Layer 6. Layer 1. *The Layer of Personal Non Existence*. What happens here?

Things like zoning out in front of the TV with ten big macs and a bowl of Doritos, with sour cream and onion dip on the side. Or things like exercising on a tread mill with an iPod on while at the same time, watching a movie and talking to your wife.

Similar to what happens in Layer 2 then, these crass distractions and lapses into our shortcomings also distance us from the pain of living. Unlike Layer 2 though, there is nothing beautiful here. Which is why I call what happens in this Layer, personal non existence. Why? We simply cannot hurt if we cease to

exist as persons.

Now let's look at how talk therapy tries to help us with these problems. The Layers therapy addresses and how much of this therapy will last.

## Changes Most Normal Talk Therapies Make

Please notice the qualifiers in this section's subhead; *most* and *normal*. I use these qualifiers because some therapies do address peoples' Inner Layers, albeit, more because this is built into their techniques than because they have an actual sense of how wounds and personality works. Therapies such as EMDR and TFT fall into this group. As well as Moreno type family sculpting and psychodrama in general.

This said, most talk therapies do not directly affect the Inner Layers, let alone the Middle Layers, Layer 6 (blocks) and Layer 5 (symptoms). So what do most conventional therapies affect?

The best way to see this is to remember that the goal of most good talk therapy is to gain *an ever deepening sense of who we are*. Now try to relate this goal visually to the ten doll nesting fractal we've been exploring.

Deeper would mean beginning on the outside, in Layer 1, and then moving inward toward the Inner Layers, one by one. Here, a good way to see how accurate this description is would be to recall some of the things people normally call this deepening process. For one thing, they call it, *opening up*. They also call it showing the therapist *what is inside you*. And *letting people in*. And they also call it *being open* and *real*.

Most talk therapies do a good job of getting people to *open up* the first doll and let the therapist in. This means the therapist gets to hear peoples' explanations for what happened. How they think it all happened and why they think they did what they did.

Most therapists then respond with more sophisticated Layer 2 explanations. Things like that *everything happens for a reason* (philosophy) and *if it wasn't for those Republicans, this never would have happened* (politics).

And when people hear these kinds of things, they do feel better. After all, a problem explained is a problem forgotten. At least, for the moment anyway. Sigh . . .

What are these therapies called?

Cognitive / Behavioral therapies. Therapies which focus on having us use our heads and wills (cognition) to think, feel, and act better (behavior). The "having a better life by making sense of how it all works while at the same time being taught to use logic to make better choices" method.

Unfortunately, because these therapies never address the fact that we have black paint spilled all over the screens of our minds, while we can at times will

ourselves to make these better choices, whenever our will power fails, so do we. And so then does the therapy.

What about going deeper then? Would that solve the problem?

Experiential Therapies live here. They progress into Layer 3 and get people in touch with their anger. And sadness. And blame. And fear. Here excuses fall away and people take steps toward becoming more real. More of who they are on the inside, and more of how they would really like to live.

Of course, these steps toward being more real come with a hefty price tag. Thus while we do feel more real in Layer 3, we also suffer more. We literally feel what it's been like to have had these problems all this time.

So is this pain a good thing? In reality, yes it is. Very much so. In truth any step toward being more real is a step toward healing. Unfortunately we humans are programmed by nature to prefer "hurting less" to "being real." Nonetheless, despite the pain which we think is telling us that we are going in the wrong direction, we are not. We are going in the right direction. We are going toward healing.

And if we are with a really skilled therapist? Then this therapist just might get us in touch with what the hot raging flames of what we feel in Layer 4. The *burn in hell for what they did to me* kinds of feelings. And when the work in therapy reaches this stage, people are really in the midst of one of the best courses any therapy can take. As well as on the way to the deepest kinds of healing we can get. If, of course, the therapist can keep you moving ahead into Layer 4.

So say we are talking about a really good therapist here. And say this therapist is having us do Layer 4 mother and or father work. How would we be doing at this point?

Truthfully? At this point, we would be experiencing a whole lot of symptoms. A whole lot of Layer 5 stuff. Things like having bad dreams and trouble sleeping. And struggles with how, when, and what we eat. Which could then lead us to choose to distance ourselves from this parent for a while. Just to manage our symptoms.

So if we are hurting this badly, is the therapy failing? Actually, not at all. Getting real is never getting worse. The question does become though, does any of this suffering have a point? For instance, can it lead to permanent changes? The answer. If you stop the therapy here, then mostly, no, it wouldn't lead to permanent changes. In fact, much of what you've done so far will evaporate shortly after stopping. And this is where the value is in knowing how the ten Layers of Personality work. You see, if you know that you are one Layer away from permanent healing, then instead of treading carefully here and simply managing the symptoms, you will tell your therapist to keep pushing you inward.

Know this has to be the most painful point in the whole therapeutic process.

Certainly for the client. And possibly for the therapist as well.

And if you don't keep pushing? Then what you've accomplished amounts to little more than letting off steam. In other words, if the therapist doesn't keep you moving inward, then all you've really done is live through a dangerous journey which never ended. What a waste. Which is why I call what has happened up to this point, doing *damage control*. After all, you did survive a dangerous journey inward toward your real self.

So is *damage control* such a bad thing? My answer. Not really. In fact, without it, our world would be a whole lot worse than it is. We all need to let off steam. The thing is, because what we end up changing is all powered by will power rather than by healing, even the most spiritual among us cannot sustain these changes.

Thus, I admit, teaching people to do damage control has its positive side. For one thing, people who learn these things are less likely to make things worse. On the other hand, because people end up better at avoiding their injuries, they end up feeling less pain. And less motivation to continue in therapy.

Unfortunately this never works out in the end. Why? Because all damage control is fueled by will power. And because we all have limits to what our will power can get us to do, when this will power runs out, we go right back to the wound only now with a more insidious face.

In other words, if we never heal the actual wound, we are doomed to repeat past our mistakes. Granted, we may repeat them in a more civilized manner. We may even stuff our urges to hurt people more times than not. Unfortunately, while this may appear to the world at large, it's not so great for us. Why? Because seeing ourselves still fighting with what we thought we had healed makes us discouraged and feel like failures. Thus we still hurt just a badly inside only in a different way.

Even if we do not keep digging deeper though, know we are still not failures. Nor have these efforts been a total waste of time. Out there in the real world, civilized blame is a lot better than punishing people. However, unless we face our fears and dig deeper so as to actually heal ourselves, in the end all we end up doing is resigning ourselves to the fact that we will never get the life we really want.

What do we have to do in order to get the life we really want? Let's look.

## Changes We Make in the Inner Layers Are Permanent

Begin by noticing how I've divided the ten nested Layers of Personality into three sections; the Four Outer Layers, the Two Middle Layers, and the Four Inner Layers. The Outer Layers are where all of the damage control we do lives. The Middle Layers are where we cross the line from temporary change

to permanent change. And the Inner Layers are where all of our permanent changes get lived out.

We've already looked at the Four Outer Layers, and a bit at the first of the Middle Layers, Layer 5. So let's start here by looking at how changes occur in these Middle Two Layers. Knowing what happens here is the key to it all.

Begin with that there are only two Layers here, Layer 5 (symptoms) and Layer 6 (blocks).

Changes which occur in Layer 5 will always be temporary. Never permanent. Each time. Every time.

Changes which occur in Layer 6 will be always be permanent. Never temporary. Each time. Every time.

Because of this permanence then, changes which occur in Layer 6 will permanently affect what happens in all nine other layers. Including Layer 5. Thus all permanent changes to our personalities begin with a change in Layer 6.

What happens when talk therapy is successful then? When changes happen in Layer 6?

When this happens, not only do we experience a decrease in our symptoms, we also gain a newly emerged ability to picture some previously blocked part of life. Which in a sense means we suddenly see some particular category of previously unmet needs. Clearly and without intellectual or will powered effort.

Now consider what I've just said.

Whenever we heal a block, we get to see some previously unmet needs. Which makes us literally feel much more needy. Unfortunately, to many therapists and clients and friends of clients, when people become more needy, they appear to have taken steps backwards. They have not. However, in a world wherein being needy is disdained and ridiculed, this error in the judgment can negatively impact what people do next in therapy. Everything from making them revert to more damage control all the way up to outright quitting therapy.

"It's not helping anymore. I don't know what happened."

This then is the first Inner Layer to change; Layer 7; the Layer of Need. And when therapy is successful, the first thing you see is that you look more visibly needy. Even when you don't want to feel this way.

These increased feelings of neediness then propel us toward the very help we would normally not seek. From the very people we can really connect to. And from the very kinds of commitments which are capable of leading to even more self realizations. Things like meditation and spiritual practices. And going back to school.

Okay. We've breached Layer 7. What happens next?

What happens next? These newly emerged urges to ask for help feed back on themselves. They function kind of like how sound some times feeds back

in an auditorium wherein the noise forces someone to take action. Eventually then, when the pain gets bad enough, the feedback from our constant neediness propels us forward, into Layer 8; the Layer of Aloneness. Otherwise known as the Layer of Disconnects.

What happens here? Here we experience the blackness of being thrown from the space ship without a suit. As well as the dark night of the soul purposely sought by Zen meditators and the Christian monastics. Who else would actually want to experience this stuff though? The truth. No one, really. However, if you see Layer 8 as the dangerous blackness we must cross to reach Eden again, then you have a good idea of what motivates mystics and yogis to take these journeys. They want to reach Nirvana. Which is similar to what you'll find if you make it into Layers 9 and 10.

What makes this feel so great? Layers 9 and 10 are where we make changes in how we can connect to each other and to our world. Changes we make in how we connect to others occur in Layer 9, the Layer of Connecting to Persons. And changes we make in how we connect to the world at large occur in Layer 10; the Layer of Connecting to Non Persons. Which is to say, the place wherein we connect to what underlies our world, the essence all things.

Here then is what happens when talk therapy is successful. The things which change in us permanently when we actually heal.

- In Layer 6, we reclaim the ability to visually experience some previously blocked part of life. Something we previously could not picture on the screen of our minds. Even when asked to make it up.
- In Layer 7, we immediately become more needy as we realize we've had unmet needs for as long as we've had this block. And the essence of this neediness is that we feel and act like babies. Literally. Why? Because this is the essence of being a baby. Layer 7. The pure babyhood experience of shamelessly being needy. With no apologies, explanations, or guilt.
- In Layer 8, we experience the dark night of the soul. Moments of real spiritual darkness. We also feel urges to make hero's journeys inward rather than running to the numbness of the Outer Layers. Why? Because once we heal a block, each time we try to run, we fail. We simply cannot undo visual healing. Thus, in Layer 8, pain becomes the great motivator, propelling us toward the thing all humans fear worse than suffering. Love.
- In Layer 9, we experience the beauty of connecting to others. Here we fall in love with any and all kinds of beings. Including anthropomorphic beings like the spirits of earth elements and religious characters. As well as to angels and Gaia and to the spirits of mountain lakes and such. As

well as to things like Moses' God in the whispering wind and Arjuna's chariot driver, Krishna.

- Finally, in Layer 10, we feel the beauty in connecting to what underlies all. We literally fall in love with the world. At least with a part of it. Here we connect to all things greater than ourselves, and to all things greater than all beings. Things like the miracle of new life or the beauty of the Grand Canyon or the sound of thunder over a Kansas wheat field. Love at it's grandest.

So what then is the essence of genuine healing? Overall, it is that healing changes the way we experience our world, by propelling us into the Inner Four Layers. Here we experience all things personally, all intensely, and all in a spiritually familiar way. Thus, here we experience the beautifully pure neediness of the newborn baby, the spiritually intense emptiness of the Zen meditator's mind, the personally joyous experience of effortlessly connecting to another being, and the deeply personal experiences of connecting to what underlies it all.

Not a bad goal for a therapy to have.

And not a bad day's work for a therapist and a client to do.

Not even a bad goal to have for a whole lifetime.

## **This Chapter's Session Notes**

In this chapter, we've begun to explore what may be the most important aspect of any talk therapy. Temporary changes versus permanent changes. Given the choice, who would really opt for the former?

The thing is, we all by nature feel urges to opt for the easier road; temporary changes. We simply prefer to avoid pain more than we desire love. This idea, in fact, is what Carl Jung spoke about when he commented on the Tibetan Book of the Dead and how advanced its authors were. And for those who may be unfamiliar with this wonderful tenth century book, please allow me to summarize it in my own layman's way.

I divide what is contained in the book into four parts. All of which the tenth century Buddhists of Tibet studied daily. Their point for this study? To achieve their life's goal; to remain conscious in the moment of their death and by doing so, complete their cycles of Karma.

Translated into Western terms, this means that this whole community focused on learning to die consciously. They believed that by doing this they would not have to then reincarnate and suffer more. In fact, the four parts of this book were mainly instructions for how to do this. Instructions which these monks studied all their lives. Instructions which the other monks even read to them in the moments of their death.

I summarize the four parts as follows.

The first part says, *If you can but for one instant remain conscious while looking into the loving face of God, then you never have to come back and suffer again. But if you can't . . .*

The second part then says, *If you can but for one instant remain conscious while looking into the terrifying face of God, then you never have to come back and suffer again. But if you can't . . .*

The third part then offers a combination of the first two. And the fourth part offers instruction for how to incarnate into a womb wherein you'll get better instruction next time.

The thing to pay attention to here is the order in which these four things occur. Thus, looking into the *loving* face of God is considered more difficult than looking into the *terrifying* face of God. Can you imagine. Sound crazy, doesn't it. After all, don't we all want to find love?

Actually, we do. But not if we have to suffer the dark night of the soul to find it.

Again, know this failing is not our fault. It is simply our nature to be like this. Moreover the ten nested Layers of Emergence Personality Theory explain how and why.

The thing is though, we now have options. What I mean is, what has been making these journeys so hard is that we have not had a map. Which like Columbus and his fellow explorers, makes us question whether going forward will make us sail off the ends of Earth.

Many experts now believe Columbus had a map. Now we do also. Perhaps then it's time to change the face of therapy. To me, in fact, it's only a matter of time.

Until next the chapter then.

I hope you are well,

Steven

